BOILER EXPLOSIONS.

In one week three frightful steam-boiler explosions have recently occurred,—one at Stockport, whose twenty lives were lost and valuable property destroyed,—one near Paisley, where six or eight lives were sacrificed,—and one in Manchester, which has involved the loss of seven or eight lives more. We begin to hope that an explosion in the vaults below the House of Commons or the House of Lords may not now be needed in order to insure the effectual co-operation of the Legislature and the Government towards the diminution at least, if not the extinction, of this ever-recurring waste of life and property. We have long alone urged that something ought to be done, such as the institution of a formal system of inspection, independently altogether of the discussion of any question as to special preventives, or of any inquiry as to general causes; and we are glad to find that now we are not alone in this good cause. Some of our provincial contemporaries, locally interested in the subject, have of late been also calling attention to it. The *Manchester Courier* "hardly likes to arm another department of the Board of Trade with power over steam boilers; but if some other safeguard against such losses of human life as have recently taken place cannot be found, can really see nothing else for it." At all events, "every boiler should be tested under competent inspection. There are proof-houses for guns and musket barrels; why should there not also be proof-houses for boilers?" The *Manchester Spectator* is of opinion that "to prevent the running of engines at such a pressure as to be utterly unsafe, and to fix the responsibility, the aid of Government must be called in, and, at all events, that a repetition of such calamities will soon make it a question not only between the owners of boilers and their workpeople, but between the former and the public at large." The metropolitan *Spectator* labours under the very mistaken idea, that the actual visitations of such dangers are not in general very frequent. Nevertheless, it is of opinion that "danger to workpeople should take the form of expense to employers, and we should then have one of the best stimulants to investigation and the practical application of progressive discoveries." We earnestly trust that something will be done at once, and the lives of our industrious population be protected henceforth at the instance of the Legislature, at whose mercy, though no criminals, they may in this case be truly said to lie.

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

THE erection of a covered market-place at Reading is being urged by the local press.—— The price of gas at Loughborough is to be reduced in June next to 7*s.* a thousand cubic feet, with 20 per cent. discount for cash.—— A site for a new church at Hove, Brighton, has been offered by Baron Goldsmid, who has already refused 1,000*l.* for the same piece of ground. Subscriptions amounting to 1,500*l.* have also been promised and mostly realized. About 4,500*l.* is the sum wanted. Of this another 1,000*l.* is to be borrowed on the parish rates. The building is to seat 900.——It is proposed by a correspondent of the *Hampshire Independent* to erect a statue to Dr. Isaac Watts, a native of Southampton, at the end of the town and avenue, where some alterations are going on at present.——It is said that Lord Ward intends applying the income to accrue from the lease of the Dudley Castle grounds to the South Staffordshire Railway Company for fete occasions, to the erection of almshouses for aged and incapacitated miners.——The gross rental of the Bristol Waterworks in March, 1850, was 5,646*l.* 16*s.*: it is now increased to 7,727*l.* The rental for "domestic use" in March, 1850, was for 3,315 houses: that for March, 1851, for 4,686 houses. There are at present upwards of 24,000 houses within the limits of the Act, a large number now in course of erection, and sites laid out for others in a variety of places. The length of mains to be laid was estimated by the engineer at 65 miles: 62 are already laid, and owing to the erection of houses in new districts, the mains will be increased to at least 75 miles.—— There are at present engaged on the Breakwater Works at Portland about 120 men, exclusive of some hundreds of convicts. Mr. Leather, the contractor, has yet to construct upwards of 1,000 feet of this undertaking. The works at present are progressing steadily. ——The foundation-stone of a Temperance-hall was to be laid at Stonehouse on Monday last.——At Gloucester a new monument in commemoration of Bishop Hooper is proposed, in the place of the one now standing in St. Mary's-square. —— The Gloucester Gas Company intend to reduce the price of gas to 6*s.*: the consumers demand a further reduction to 5*s.*——A plumber and glazier at Darlington was lately fined 5*l.* for helping himself (for how long is unknown) to the gas of the Darlington Gas Company without leave asked or payment made. He had supplied his legitimate burners by a subsidiary pipe, which he could fix and remove at pleasure, according to the local *Times*, without its passing through his meter.——The erection of the new Roman Catholic cathedral at Buckie, says the *Elgin Courant*, has been entrusted to Mr. John Lamb, builder, Bishopmill: Messrs. A. and W. Reid are the architects.——A mill-dam, covering 80 to 100 acres, at Eaglesham, according to a Glasgow paper, gave way on Monday in last week, and destroyed a good deal of property.——The Clothworkers' Company of London has offered to give 15 acres of building land, near Coleraine, as a site for the erection of the proposed "Magee College," and also a donation of 3,000*l.* in aid of the fund for building and endowment.

A HOME FOR THE ARTS AND SCIENCES IN THE METROPOLIS.

IT is a disgrace to this country that the Government do not provide a national palace of ample size for the residence of Art. Private subscription has raised in a few months a Palace of Industry of great cost, for its temporary accommodation, and the Government might safely rely on the public support for the erection of a building adapted for the purpose. Why, then, should it any longer turn a deaf ear to the matter? Let it at once set about it, and make amends for placing the munificent donation to the country of a private individual in a cellar, then transferring it to a place wholly unsuitable for the purpose as a temporary abode. To its further discredit it leaves our scientific societies to shift for themselves. The Royal Society has no place that it can call by right its own, which it most decidedly ought to have, dedicated to it by the nation. The Society of Arts is in a similar position, and many other societies, such as the Antiquarian, the Archæological, the British Architects', and the Engineers';—all such have a most equitable claim on the country for house room.

We have a Prince, the consort of our beloved Queen, who is doing much for us, and I sincerely hope that his present exertions may be appreciated by all. I am sure his intentions are good, whatever the result may be, and that they may lead to a better state of things must be the wish of all. To him, therefore, Mr. Editor, let us all appeal—let us with one voice declare that such a disgrace to our country ought at once to be removed.

Let us be able to point with the finger of pride to our national buildings for the reception of art. Our British Museum is (although it may not please all our architectural critics) still the only building we have worthy the name of a national building, as applied for the reception of art. The National Gallery might do very well for the Society of Arts, in conjunction with the Institutes of British Architects and Engineers, or for any of the other societies which are considered entitled to any national accommodation, and for which it might be best suited. For the National Gallery of *Painting and Sculpture*, combined with the Royal Academy and the Annual Exhibition of Modern Art (for they ought all to be in the same abode), I would find better accommodation, and in the very heart of the metropolis, where the National Gallery ought to be, and as easily accessible to the people of the east as of the west, or of the north, or of the south, of this great city.

I am not one of those to propose impossibilities, and merely waste your time, Mr. Editor. I have given the matter much consideration, and I do not see the difficulty of obtaining a palace (or palaces, if necessary) for the appropriate residence of the arts and sciences in one of the most civilised countries of the world. No time like the present; and surely, with an overflowing exchequer, it would be a very proper time to set apart a few thousands, which none would grudge, for the commencement of a fund to be applied to such a noble purpose: it would tend to the instruction and delight of the million, and would not only raise us in their estimation, but in opinion of our continental neighbours, who most justly sneer at our most degrading position.

Pray, urge this matter on the consideration of the Government, and call on the public to support you in so laudable an undertaking, and invoke our Prince to take the matter into his serious consideration.

I have heard from good authority that the noble proprietors of BURLINGTON-HOUSE, PICCADILLY, would dispose of their property, in which, by-the-bye, I am in no way interested; but I do not know a more eligible spot in the metropolis than that for a National Gallery, and the Government ought to be ashamed of itself, if it let the opportunity of purchasing it slip: it has a frontage of 257 feet by a depth of 600 feet, and the present mansion might be applied for the accommodation of the Royal Academy, or any other purpose which the Government might choose to dedicate to art.

I am sure the noble Earl, the amateur architect and its founder, would right gladly bring this matter to bear if he could only rise from his grave and see how appropriate it would be for such a purpose, and how little appropriate it is now for a private residence, owing to the great alteration which has taken place in the surrounding property.

I trust you will concur with me in my ideas, or at any rate that you will allow them to occupy a space in your journal, that they may rouse the British Lion to plead for art.

CHARLES MAYHEW, Architect.

IRISH ENGINEERING AND BUILDING WORKS.

THAT part of the Dublin and Belfast Junction Railway, between Gorah Wood and Portadown, is steadily progressing towards completion, and is to be delivered up ready for traffic on the 1st of June next. Sir John M'Neill is the engineer in chief.

The contract for the portion of the Londonderry and Enniskillen Railway, between Strabane and Newtownstewart, has been disposed of to Mr. M'Cormick, and the works are at present in progress.

The Board of Superintendence of the Cork Bridewell have commenced to add considerably to the accommodation in their prison: they have also determined to introduce gas.

The unfinished works on the new road at Scarawalshe, leading from Enniscorthy to Bagnalstown, including the building of a bridge, and which contain 1,477 perches, are to be completed, and the cost is not to exceed 2,200*l.* Also the unfinished works on the road leading from Gorey to Tirmahely, containing about 631 perches, and the probable cost of construction will be 946*l.*

Sundry works are to be executed at the Church of Derryvollen, county Mayo, according to plans prepared by the architect to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

The Poor-Law Commissioners have advertised for the erection of sundry buildings to the workhouse of the Ardee Union, according to the plans prepared by Mr. Wilkinson.

The Drainage Commissioners finding that the bridges, culverts, &c. within the districts of Turloughmore, Lavally, and Lough Corrib were insufficient, have caused same to be reconstructed, and have declared that the expenses of executing the works shall be as follows:—Lackagh bridge, to cost 207*l.*; Corro-

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